

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 SIL-01 CU-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 L-03 IO-13 H-01 /058 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1419

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DEPT PLEASE PASS AFL-CIO, AIFLD, AND RCIA

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE TRADE UNION LEADERS REQUEST AFL-CIO
SOLIDARITY VISIT

REF: HOLWAY-FREEMAN PHONECON, JULY 15

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF 16 TRADE UNIONS, MOSTLY OF THE VERTICALIST PERONIST LINE, INTERVENED AND NONINTERVENED ALIKE, MET WITH LABATT LAST WEEK TO REQUEST THAT AFL-CIO SCHEDULE ITS PROPOSED "SOLIDARITY VISIT" TO ARGENTINA ASAP AND HOPEFULLY NO LATER THAN MID-AUGUST. THE MEETING WAS HELD AT THE GLASS EMPLOYEES UNION HALL AND WAS ORGANIZED BY ALBERTO CAMPOS, A MEMBER OF THE LAST EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE METALWORKERS UNION (UOM) AND OF THE OGT WHO RECENTLY VISITED US AS INVITATION OF AIFLD.

2. WHILE WE HAVE NOT THOROUGHLY CANVASSED OPINIONS IN THE ANTIVERTICALIST UNION CAMP AS YET, COMMERCIAL WORKER LEADER FLORENCIO CARRANZA WHO IS ACTIVE IN LATTER GROUP, INFORMS US THAT UNION LEADERS HE HAS CONSULTED ALSO ARE IN ACCORD WITH THE PROPOSED VISIT.

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3. FACTORS APPEARING TO FAVOR SUCH A VISIT NOW INCLUDE FACT THERE IS GREATER UNITY IN MOVEMENT BETWEEN VERTICALISTS AND ANTI-VERTICALISTS AS RESULT OF (A) THE DECISION COMMONLY REACHED NOT TO FIELD A WORKER DELEGATION TO THE ILO CONFERENCE LAST MONTH AND (B) COMMON OPPOSITION TO THE GROUND RULES APPROVED BY THE MILITARY JUNTA FOR GOVERNING THE REVISION OF THE TRADE UNION LAW, PARTICULARLY THE DECISION TO GRANT TRADE UNION RECOGNITION ONLY TO "FIRST

DEGREE" (I.E. LOCAL) UNION ORGANIZATIONS. WE BELIEVE THAT ARGENTINE UNION LEADERS ARE PRESSING FOR AFL-CIO VISIT NOW BECAUSE THE TRADE UNION LAW IS IN FINAL STAGES OF BEING REDRAFTED BY LABOR MINISTRY STAFF. UNION LEADERS ARE INTERESTED IN SEEING AFL-CIO REINFORCE THEIR ARGUMENTS FOR RETAINING TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AT THE NATIONAL FEDERATION LEVEL, AS WELL AS LOBBYING FOR OTHER POINTS OF CRITICAL INTEREST TO LABOR MOVEMENT.

4. CAMPOS AND LABATT SEPARATELY HAVE SOUNDED OUT LABOR MINISTRY AS TO OFFICIAL REACTION TO PROPOSED VISIT. LABOR UNDERSECRETARY CAPT DALL'ASTA INFORMED US THAT LABOR MINISTER LIENDO HAD NO OBJECTIONS AND WAS WILLING TO RECEIVE THE GROUP. REPORTEDLY, HE WOULD ALSO ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA. WE ALSO CONSULTED TWO HIGH-RANKING AIDES OF ADMIRAL MASSERA WHOSE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WAS THAT ANY SUCH VISIT WAS WELCOME, SINCE THE SITUATION IN ARGENTINA IN THEIR OPINION WAS NOWHERE NEARLY AS BAD AS THAT COMMONLY ASSUMED IN THE US. THEY ALSO THOUGHT THAT MASSERA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH AFL-CIO GROUP.

5. WE HAVE BEEN DISTURBED BY REPORTS THAT 5 OR 6 UNION LEADERS (INCLUDING SOME WHO ATTENDED MEETING WITH LABATT LAST WEEK) WERE SUBSEQUENTLY WARNED BY FEDERAL POLICEMEN OR ARMY OFFICERS TO QUIT THEIR UNION POSTS IMMEDIATELY AND EVEN LEAVE THE COUNTRY IF THEY COULD. WE ARE CHECKING FURTHER, BUT HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM WHETHER ANY OF THESE LEADERS IN FACT HAVE SUBMITTED THEIR RESIGNATIONS IN RESPONSE TO SUCH PRESSURES OR INDEED WHETHER SUCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THREATS ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE, AS HAD BEEN RUMORED. SOME THIRD-PARTY UNION SOURCES APPEAR SKEPTICAL AND CONSENSUS AMONG THOSE WE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED WAS TO DOWNPLAY IF NOT DISMISS THE REPORTS. WE NOTE THAT GASTRONOMIC UNION LEADER ELORZA LEFT COUNTRY FOR A VISIT TO SPAIN TWO WEEKS AGO AND UNDERSTAND HE PLANS TO RETURN VIA WASHINGTON. COMMERCIAL WORKER LEADER CARRANZA WAS PLANNING TO ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON EARLIER THIS WEEK ON A DEPT LEADER GRANT CO-ORDINATED WITH RCIA, BUT CARRANZA FORCED TO POSTPONE DEPARTURE DUE TO INTERNAL UNION REBELLION.

6. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RESPONSE EARLIEST FROM AFL-CIO CONCERNING PROPOSED SOLIDARITY VISIT. DUE TO TODMAN VISIT AND CODEL YATRON, WE WOULD PREFER VISIT EITHER FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST OR AFTER AUGUST 20. CAMPOS INTERESTED IN HAVING UAW REPRESENTATIVE JOINING AFL-CIO TEAM. TRANSPORTATION SECTOR INTERESTED IN HAVING OTERO PARTICIPATE.
CHAPLIN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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